

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 2, 5-17, 20-29, 31, 32, and 35-46 are pending. Claims 9-15, 24-29, and 39-46 are withdrawn from consideration. Claim 30 was canceled. In the previous Office Action, claims 1-8 and 16-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101. Independent claims 1-8, 16-23, and 31-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tahara (6,560,282). In light of Applicant remarks in the previous Office Action response, claims 1, 2, 5-8, 31, 32, and 35-38 are now allowed. The allowability of the above noted claims is gratefully acknowledged. Claims 16, 17, and 20-23 are rejected.

To facilitate prosecution, claims 16, 17, and 20-23 are canceled. All pending claims are now believed allowable. In light of the above remarks relating to the independent claims, the remaining dependent claims are believed allowable for at least the reasons noted above. Applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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